

THE Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival
of Religion in *England* *Scotland* and *America*.

Saturday AUGUST 13. 1743. § N°. 24.

ATTESTATIONS &c. continued.

No.XIII. From the Rev Mr HALL, Pastor of the Church
in Sutton, in the County of Worcester.

HAVING been desired by some of my Brethren, to write, provided I was not like to be personally present at the *Commencement*; to signify my Sentiments of the *Work of a religious Nature*, that has been carried on in many Parts of this Land for some Years past;

I am free, it should be known, that *I do greatly rejoice in the blessed Work that has been in the Land*, and have been to the utmost of my Power labouring to promote it in these Parts.

And as to the *Essence* of it; if I understand the *Doctrines of the Gospel* according to Truth, and that *old solid Calvinistical Divinity*, which was so dear to our *Forefathers*; and if the *Writings* of Messrs. *Shepard, Willard, Stoddard*, and numberless other Divines of that Stamp and Principle, are to be regarded as the *Writings* of Men that rightly understood the *Way of Salvation*; I must conclude that the *Work* is the *same*, as to the *essential Parts* of it, which in *their Days*, as well as from the Beginning, had been by the *Servants* of the most high GOD, *rejoyced in, as the only Way to Heaven, which the Gospel teacheth.*

Some Irregularities ('tis true) have sometimes attended the Subjects of this Work; and some Imprudences may also have sometimes attended the Promoters of it: But what is Man that he should be perfect?

There may be also some high Pretenders to the Work of Conversion in this remarkable Day, that may turn out Counterfeits:

feits : and such *Tares* have been among the *Wheat* hitherto, and will be to the End : so that neither is this to be wondered at.

Moreover I have not been without Fears, left some at this Day run into *Antinomian* and *familistical Errors* ; and that others would fall into *enthusiastick Phrenses*, Evils by all Means to be watched and guarded against : And who in this Life is out of Danger ? Dangers of this Kind are proportionably greater according to the Height of Men's Zeal, and the Smallness of their Knowledge and Experiences ; and if where there is a vast Number of young and zealous Converts in a Place, and very few of long Experience to steady them, some for a Time appear in some Respects very weak and unsteady ; 'tis not to be wondered at : being fed with the sincere Milk of the Word, 'tis hopeful, they will grow thereby.

But I conceive that in general the Subjects of this Work, are groundlessly charged with such Errors and Evils at this Day : and indeed I marvel not at it. For as there are very sad Tinctures of *Arminianism* in many ; so with the Subjects of that Error, the PURE DOCTRINES OF FREE GRACE and JUSTIFICATION by FAITH ALONE, are often charged upon, as *Antinomian Errors*. And with the dead Formalist, THAT SACRED ZEAL, which is enkindled in the Breast of true Believers, from the sanctifying Spirit, forming their Hearts to Love, and drawing forth the Powers of their Souls in a fervent lively Manner, to pursue the great Duties required of us by GOD in his Word ; why all this is by such termed *Enthusiasm*.

And no wonder therefore there are so many Enemies to the blessed Work of GOD in the Land ; seeing it is to be feared there are so many, who would have all to be counted *Enthusiasts*, *Antinomians*, &c. that are under any powerful Constraints from the Views of divine Sovereignty and Grace.

But let such Men think what they will of their slighting the precious Showers of divine Grace ; yet I am of the Opinion of Mr. Edwards of Northampton, that the GREAT JEHOVAH of a Truth has been in New-England.

And although I hope many of those who are fighting against this Work, doing it ignorantly, will find Mercy ; yet for one that has seen and known so much of the Power & Grace of GOD, in breaking down the stubborn Hearts of so many Scores of Sinners, that were wicked Livers, turning them from their ungodly Courses

Courses to the Ways of Virtue ; who are became *some of the most lively Christians*, and as far as I can learn and judge, walking in Godliness and Honesty ; as also the wonderful Change I have observed, even upon such as were *moral Men before, and high Professors*, who have been convinced of their being *very Hypocrites*, building upon a false Foundation, who declare with Wonder and Transport, what GOD has done for their Souls, and think none so beholden as they, to *divine sovereign Grace*. Upon the whole, if *after all that I have seen and known*, of the Wonders of GOD's Power and Grace, I should join in with such, as render *these Doings of the LORD to be the Work of the Devil*, I have thought *in me it would be the Sin against THE HOLY GHOST*.

I stand ready to join in bearing *any proper Testimony against the Ingratitude* of the Men of this Generation. And for my own Part think, *I can never praise GOD enough, for the Work he hath wrought among us* ; and doubt not but he will carry it on to greater Perfection.

From your unworthy Brother,

Sutton June 30, 1743.

David Hall.

No. XIV. From the Rev. Mr. BRADSTREET, Pastor of a Church in Gloucester, in the County of Essex.

WHEN I first saw in the *Tuesday's Paper* of May the 31st the *Proposal and Desire* of a Number of *Ministers* both in *Town and Country*, that *such of their Brethren* as are persuaded that there has of late been *a happy Revival of Religion, thro' an extraordinary divine Influence in many Parts of this Land, &c.*---- Might have an *INTERVIEW at Boston the Day after* the approaching *Commencement* ; immediately I thought within my self I would be present then ; but the Circumstances of my Family are such as by no Means will admit of it.

Therefore this comes to inform you ; that *I am fully persuaded that of late (Glory be to GOD) there has been a happy Reformation, and glorious Revival of Religion in a wonderful Manner, in many Places in NEW-ENGLAND* ; tho' in some Places attended with some Irregularities & Disorders thro' the permitted Agency of *Satan* ; and no Wonder at all that *this grand Arch-Enemy* should use all his Devices at such a Day, to blemish so glorious a Work, which so fatally shakes his Kingdom.

I am sure in my little Parish there is of late a very considerable Reformation and Revival of Religion. (Let God have all the Glory :) Tho' I had labour'd hard for it, yet I could never perswade young Persons, to form themselves into a Society, for the spending together the Sabbath Evening in religious Exercises, until about fifteen Months past : And now we have two Societies of young Persons who meet together twice in the Week to read, sing, and pray ; to each of which I preach once a Quarter. And some of them which were too much addicted to the youthful Sins of Quarelling, Swearing, Drinking, &c. seem to be wonderfully reformed, and are hungering and thirsting after the Righteousness of CHRIST ; and there is a very pleasant Change wro't in them. And the Aged many of them (tho' some are stumbled at the present Day) among us seem to be anointed afresh : And there is a happy Revival of Religion. Our Lectures which have been once a Week, for more than fifteen Months past, are fuller and better attended, than when we had (as formerly) a Lecture once in six Weeks. We have had many, (mostly young Persons) under great Concern and deep Convictions, many crying out in Time of divine Service under a Sense of their Sins, What they should do, and the most of them have had their Convictions ending in the Joy of the LORD, and Comfort of the HOLY GHOST.

In my very small Parish (consisting of about eighty Families) we have had in about twelve Months past (when we had before more Communicants than Families) about forty added to the Church ; and all excepting one, by the Grace of God (blessed be his Name) live to bear good Fruit.

Thanks be to God, we have no Divisions, nor Separations among us ; we are without Dreams, Visions and Trances, (tho' there has been some in the Neighbourhood) nor are we troubled with Exhorters. The People seem to express a greater Love for their Minister, and a greater Desire than ever to hear the Word ; and I hope their unworthy Minister has a greater Regard than ever for their Souls.

So that I am far from joining with those, who say the present Day in general is a dark Day to our Churches, and looks with a melancholly Aspect. (Tho' to be sure, for the Divisions of Reuben there ought to be great Searchings of Heart ; and my Soul mourns in secret for the Divisions of the House of Levi, and the Separation there is from some of our Churches) And I freely confess that I verily believe, that there has been

of

of late and now is, a blessed Work of GOD going on in many Parts of this Land, and divine Influence the Spring of it. And it is surprising to me that any, because of some Disorders, should attribute the whole of the glorious Scene to the Delusions of the Devil ; for I am full in the Opinion that *in general the present Day is a glorious Day of GOD's Grace to NEW-ENGLAND.* Should be exceeding glad, if at your Interview (and to this End my Heart's Desire and Prayer to Almighty GOD is that much of the divine Presence may be with you) *some Me:bol may be taken (as is one proposed End of your Meeting) to guard People against such Delusions & Mistakes, as at such a Season they are in Danger of falling into, and that this blessed Work may continue & flourish among us.*--- I ask your Prayers for me, and my Flock : and am your Servant and Brother in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel,

Benjamin Bradstreet.

Gloucester Annisquam Parish June 30. 1743.

No. XV. From the Rev. Mr. WALES, Pastor of the Church in Raynham, in the County of Bristol.

I Having lately been inform'd by the public Prints, that it is the Desire of a Number of Ministers in Boston, and elsewhere ; that those of their Brethren in the Ministry, who are convinced, that the present Operation upon the Minds and Consciences of People in this Land, is THE WORK of GOD ; would meet in Boston the Day after Commencement ; to consult and advise what may be proper to be done for the promoting this good Work, and also to prevent those Imprudencies that in some Places have been said to attend it ; my Circumstances will not admit of my coming down ; I therefore thought I would write a Line to let you know, that I most firmly believe the present Operation to be THE WORK of the blessed GOD ; and I, and many of my Charge, shall I hope, for ever bless and praise the great GOD for the great Display of his special Grace he has lately made in this Place, in bringing of many Souls savingly to close with CHRIST, and embrace him according to the Gospel Offer.

As to the Imprudencies and Irregularities that have been said to attend this blessed Work, I can say nothing about them ; for I have seen (blessed be GOD for it) few if any of them. I should greatly rejoice, to have any Thing done, that might have

have a Tendency to promote this Work of the blessed GOD in this Land, and thro' the World : and should be willing to have my Name annexed to any Thing that may be publish'd for the promoting and encouraging this Work of GOD. In the general, I am full in my Thot's with Mr. Edwards in his *Discourse, upon the present Revival of Religion, in five Parts*; and am willing to have my Name set to what may be publish'd *consistent with that*.

It is my Purpose to give in my *Testimony to this great and good Work*, and an *Account of the Rise & Progress* of it among us, in a short Time ; and therefore shall not now enlarge. Praying that the GREAT SHEPHERD may lead his faithful Ambassadors into such Methods and Measures, (on the Day of their Convention) whereby his Glory may be advanced, and the Kingdom of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUSCHRIST, be made to flourish every where, by Souls being brought into it : Intreating an Interest in your Prayers to GOD for me and my Charge ; I subscribe my self your most unworthy Servant in the Labours of the Gospel of the BLESSED JESUS.

Raynham, July 4th. 1743.

John Wales.

No. XVI. From the Rev. Mr. HOVEY, Pastor of the 2d Church in Rochester, in the County of Plimouth.

IN Compliance with the Desire of some of the Rev. Ministers at Boston, viz. That the Ministers of this Land who could not be present at an appointed Interview the Day after Commencement, and yet were fully satisfied in their own Minds, that there has of late been an extraordinary Work of GOD's SPIRIT upon the Hearts of People in this Land, or a special Revival of Religion in many Places among us, would communicate their Thoughts in Writing : These are to inform, that I the Subscriber being fully persuaded that there has been such a Work, such a glorious Out-pouring of the HOLY SPIRIT upon our Land of late ; think myself obliged in Gratitude, and bound in Duty to the GLORIOUS AUTHOR of said Work, to join with you in giving Glory and Praise unto Him for the same according to my Capacity. At the same Time am ready to join with you also in bearing proper Testimony against those Errors in Doctrine, and Disorders in Practice that any may have been guilty of, or fallen into since this blessed Revival. In a Word, I having seen and carefully perused a Declaration signed

signed by the Rev. Ministers of the *Eastern Association of the County of York* (which I suppose you have in your Hands) † can readily unite with them in each Article: Altho' I at first hesitated a little when I came to that Article of ordaining Ministers at large, yet when I had pondered upon it and heard their Explanation of it, I think I can comply with it in the Sense they intend it: So that I need not be more particular in declaring my Sentiments. But earnestly desiring an Interest in your Prayers for me and my Flock, I remain yours in the Fellowship of the Gospel,

Biddeford, June 26. 1743.

Ivory Hovey.

† See Page 175.



An APPENDIX

Containing ATTESTATIONS which have come to the Committee from several Pastors since the Breaking up of THE ASSEMBLY.

No. I. From the Rev. Mr. APPLETON, Pastor of the first Church in Cambridge, in the County of Middlesex.

Cambridge, July 18. 1743.

Reverend Gentlemen,

WHEREAS I was not present at the Assembly of Ministers in Boston the Day after Commencement, I do now agreeable to the Desire and Proposal in the publick Prints send in the following ATTESTATION, containing my Thoughts concerning the late, and present Times, relating to Religion, viz.

From what I have heard, and from what I have seen, and observed in several Towns; but more especially in my own Flock, I can testify that there has been in some of the Years past, a religious Concern among People of all Ages, but more especially of the younger Sort, that has been extraordinary. And I am perswaded that the SPIRIT of GOD has been stirring up Convictions in Multitudes, beyond what has been common. And there is Reason to hope that greater Numbers than usual, have had gracious saving Impressions made upon their Souls; which is to be acknowledged to the Glory of GOD's rich and free

free Grace. And I am perswaded from my Acquaintance with Ministers, that this is the Judgment and Opinion of a great Number of them whose Names will not be found in this publick Testimony.

But then what I look upon as Matter of Lamentation at this Day is, that those Convictions as to great Numbers in these Parts of the Land have dyed away without leaving any good Effect upon them. And that through the Weakness of Men, and the Subtily of Satan, many Errors, Delusions and Disorders have crept into some Places, and much of the religious Concern is degenerating into Controversy.

But I pray God that the Testimonies and the Counsels, that are or have been given by the Ministers of CHRIST, may be blessed for the suppressing every Thing of a threatening Aspect upon these Churches: And that we may all be directed to, and united in, those Measures which GOD will own, and bless for the further promoting and advancing the Interest and Kingdom of JESUS CHRIST among us, even that Kingdom of his, which is Righteousness and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

Nathaniel Appleton.

No. II. From the Rev. Mr. PARKER, Pastor of the first Church in Plimpton, in the County of Plymouth.

Plimpton, July 4. 1743.

I Was desirous if Providence had given Leave to have been at the CONVENTION this Week: but my Circumstances are such that I must be excused. I wou'd therefore by a Line signify my Thoughts of the Work which has of late so remarkably appeared among us: And as I have had Opportunity of seeing and conversing with many that have been the Subjects of this Work, and of observing their holy, blameless and circumspect Walk and Conversation; I am fully convinced that it's no other than a glorious Work of GOD; and a Day of his great Power and Grace; and that all are obliged to own and acknowledge it to the Praise and Glory of Free Grace.

(To be continued.)